

MEMORANDUM

October 6, 2011

TO: Government Operations and Fiscal Policy Committee
FROM: Dr. Costis Toregas, Council IT Adviser 
SUBJECT: Quarterly Review - Cable Television Issues

Expected to attend:

E. Steven Emanuel, Chief Information Officer, Department of Technology Services (DTS)
Mitsuko R. Herrera, Cable and Broadband Administrator, DTS
Richard Wells, Cable and Communications Advisory Committee (CCAC) Chair
Joshua Bokee, Director Governmental Affairs, Comcast
Tom Steele, Vice President and Regulatory Counsel, RCN
Briana Gowing, Verizon Maryland

Summary of staff recommendations for action:

1. Receive **cable franchisee** summaries regarding **their new initiatives**.
2. **Discuss** cable operator performance **concerns** arising from 2nd Quarter Score Card of 2011.
3. **Focus** on improvement of “systemic” weakness areas:
 - Customer service
 - Restoring residential areas after installations
 - Recovery of service after major storms
4. **Discuss** potential Cable and Communications Advisory Committee contribution to “systemic” weakness resolution.
5. **Provide** desired **outcomes** for future sessions.

Franchisee Reports

The three cable providers (Comcast, Verizon, and RCN) will update the Committee on major corporate program initiatives that impact the community.

Score Card Review

The Cable and Broadband office provides a quarterly Score Card that rates each operator against both Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defined standards of performance and internal Customer Service outcomes. The 2nd Quarter 2011 Score Card was distributed as part of a broader eReport (see ©1-13 for the entire report).

The Score Card indicates broad compliance of all franchisees with the federal customer service standards. There are two areas of County-defined outcomes that deserve comment:

- Timeliness of complaint resolutions on ©2 shows that only 64% of residents thought Comcast resolved their problems in a timely manner, and only 62% for Verizon. RCN had a 100% rating. The low percentage of satisfaction for Comcast and Verizon deserves discussion and interpretation.
- The data on complaint process and performance on ©4 shows that once a complaint has been lodged with the Cable and Broadband Office, it is resolved, on the average, within 5.4 days, down from 17.4 days in prior reports. Yet, as the Administrator observes, these complaints should be resolved in a speedy manner without the intervention of the County. Accessing and reviewing internal company Customer Service Representative (CSR) logs would go a long way towards understanding this lagging indicator.

The Cable and Broadband Administrator will provide answers to Committee questions regarding this report.

Pervasive Weakness Areas in Customer Service

Complaints for customer service now come into the County via the MC311 system. The current volume is 152 information calls and 1,200 complaint calls over the 9-month period from January through September 2011. ©14-17 describe the major categories for these complaints and show the responses that trained MC311 Customer Service Representatives provide to each caller. The text of these responses is very instructive and should be publicized to County residents more broadly.

In addition to MC311 and the Cable Office, calls also come directly into Councilmember offices asking for resolution of complex or unresolved issues. These calls tend to cluster around three areas:

1. Poor customer service (unable to reach responsible managers, missed appointments for service);
2. Restoring residential work areas and subpar work performed by franchisee or subcontractor crews;
3. Delays for restoring service after major storms or other disasters.

In order to explore the systemic issues behind these perennial concerns, staff has suggested that the Cable and Communications Advisory Committee (CCAC) become involved, understand the manner in

which these issues are currently resolved, and provide guidance and suggestions for improvement. Its chair, Richard Wells, will be available to discuss their current program and interest in this area with the Committee.

The CCAC creation is documented in the County Code, Section 8A-30 (on ©18-19), and its current composition is provided on ©20. The membership of the CCAC is drawn from a broad cross-section of the County and is broadly representative of technology areas. In addition, the CCAC is to provide advice and recommendations not only to the Executive branch, but to the Council. Therefore, this exploration of systemic complaint issues is proper for the CCAC.

An additional issue identified early on by the CCAC was the energy performance of set-top boxes and options that may exist to reduce energy consumption in residences through wiser management of these devices. An update of this program could be provided on request.

Future Discussion Items for the Committee's Consideration

The next opportunity for discussion of Cable issues will be at the November 14th GO Committee meeting, when an early look at the 2013 Cable Plan and parameters for its development will be discussed. In addition, one of the major franchises is up for renewal in 2013, so the process of renewal management and the Council role in that process will be reviewed in November and subsequent sessions, as appropriate. Finally, the Public, Education and Government channel group (PEG) is undertaking major discussions regarding an all-High Definition format for programming and will be in a position to share some of their goals and targets in a future session.



We're Here For You!

Office of Cable and Broadband Services

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT

Updated 2011 2nd Quarter Customer Service & Compliance Report

In preparation for the October 10, 2011 GO Committee meeting, the Office of Cable and Broadband Services is providing this update to the previously distributed 2011 2nd Quarter Customer Service and Compliance report.

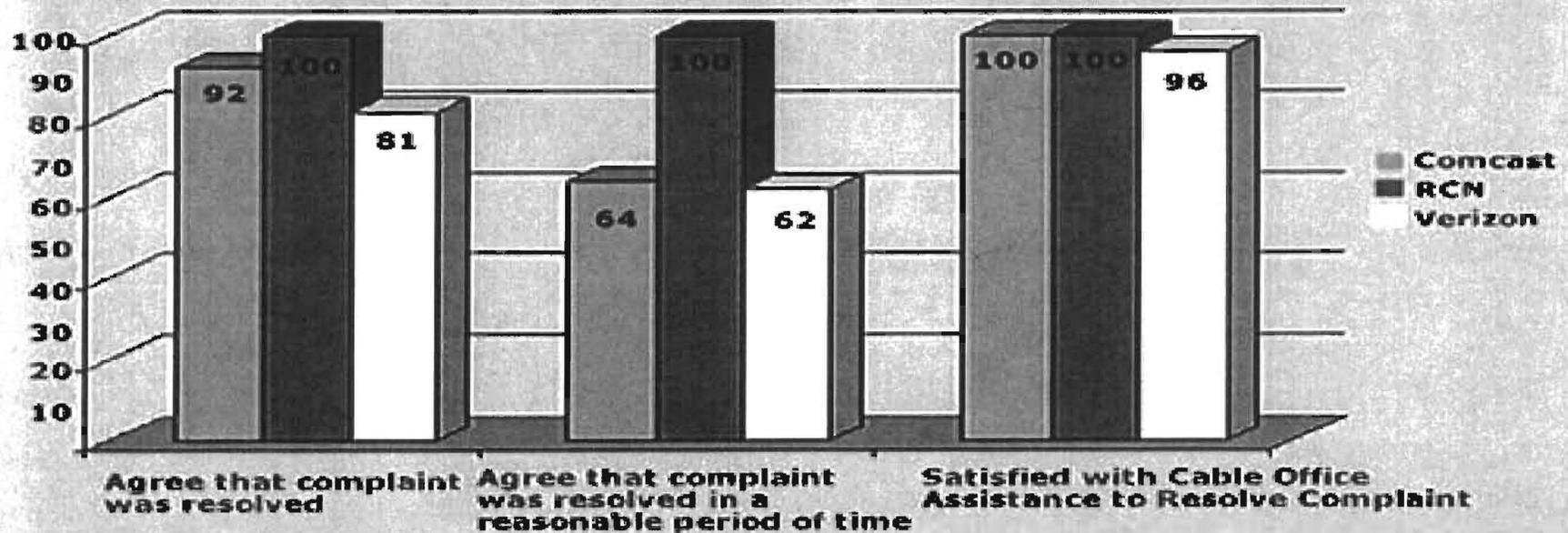
The previous report included all data available as of August 12, 2011 for complaints received in the 1st and 2nd Quarters. However, since August, of the complaints that we received in the 1st and 2nd Quarters, more of these complaints have since been resolved and additional satisfaction surveys have been received. A third quarter report will be distributed in mid-November 2011. If you have further questions please contact Margie Williams at (240) 777-3762 or cable.broadband@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Customer Service Score Card

Download Customer Service Score Card

All three cable providers are in compliance with the FCC Customer Service standards for the 2011 2nd Quarter.

On a monthly basis the Cable and Broadband Office sends a follow-up letter to all consumers who have requested assistance from our office, and for whom the cable operator reports the complaint has been resolved. Over 97% of the respondents are satisfied with the assistance that the Cable and Broadband Office provided to get their complaint resolved. However, only 75% of the respondents agreed that the cable provider resolved their complaint in a reasonable amount of time and only 74% of the respondents agreed that their issue was resolved. A breakout of this information is provided in the attached score card. The Cable and Broadband Office staff will be meeting with each of the three providers to address the need to resolve the customer's complaint in its entirety before closing out the issue with the County.



Montgomery County Maryland 2011 Cable Operator Customer Service Score Card

FCC Compliance Statistics

Based on data reported by cable operators, measuring all calls and scheduled appointments. Data is not independently verified.

		Telephone Answering								Service				Installation			
		Answered in 30 Seconds				Transferred to Agent in 30 Secs				Service within 24 Hours				Installed within 7 Days			
		Minimum FCC Standard 90%								Minimum FCC Standard 95%				Minimum FCC Standard 95%			
		1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11	1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11	1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11	1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11
COMCAST		98.0%	99.0%			94.7%	95.0%			99.8%	99.8%			96.5%	99.6%		
RCN		95.3%	95.3%			91.7%	93.3%			99.7%	99.7%			100.0%	100.0%		
VERIZON		100.0%	100.0%			95.0%	95.2%			96.0%	95.7%			94.3%	99.1%		

Customer Service Outcomes

*Based on Cable and Broadband Office collected data, measuring customer satisfaction among complaints referred to the Cable and Broadband Office for assistance and reported by the cable operator to have been resolved.**

	Cumulative Survey Response Rate	Agree That Complaint Was Resolved				Agree That Complaint Was Resolved in a Reasonable Period of Time				Satisfied with Outcome of Complaint				Satisfied with Cable Office Assistance to Resolve Complaint			
		1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11	1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11	1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11	1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11
COMCAST	62%	80%	92%			70%	84%			87%	94%			94%	100%		
	106/171	56/70	33/36			40/70	23/36			61/70	34/36			66/70	36/36		
RCN	56%	75%	100%			75%	100%			50%	100%			100%	100%		
	4/9	3/4	1/1			3/4	1/1			2/4	1/1			4/4	1/1		
VERIZON	58%	89%	81%			81%	82%			81%	85%			94%	96%		
	62/107	25/36	21/26			29/36	18/26			29/36	22/26			34/36	25/26		
TOTAL	60%	76%	87%			74%	83%			84%	90%			95%	98%		
	172/287	84/110	54/62			81/110	40/83			92/110	56/62			104/110	61/62		

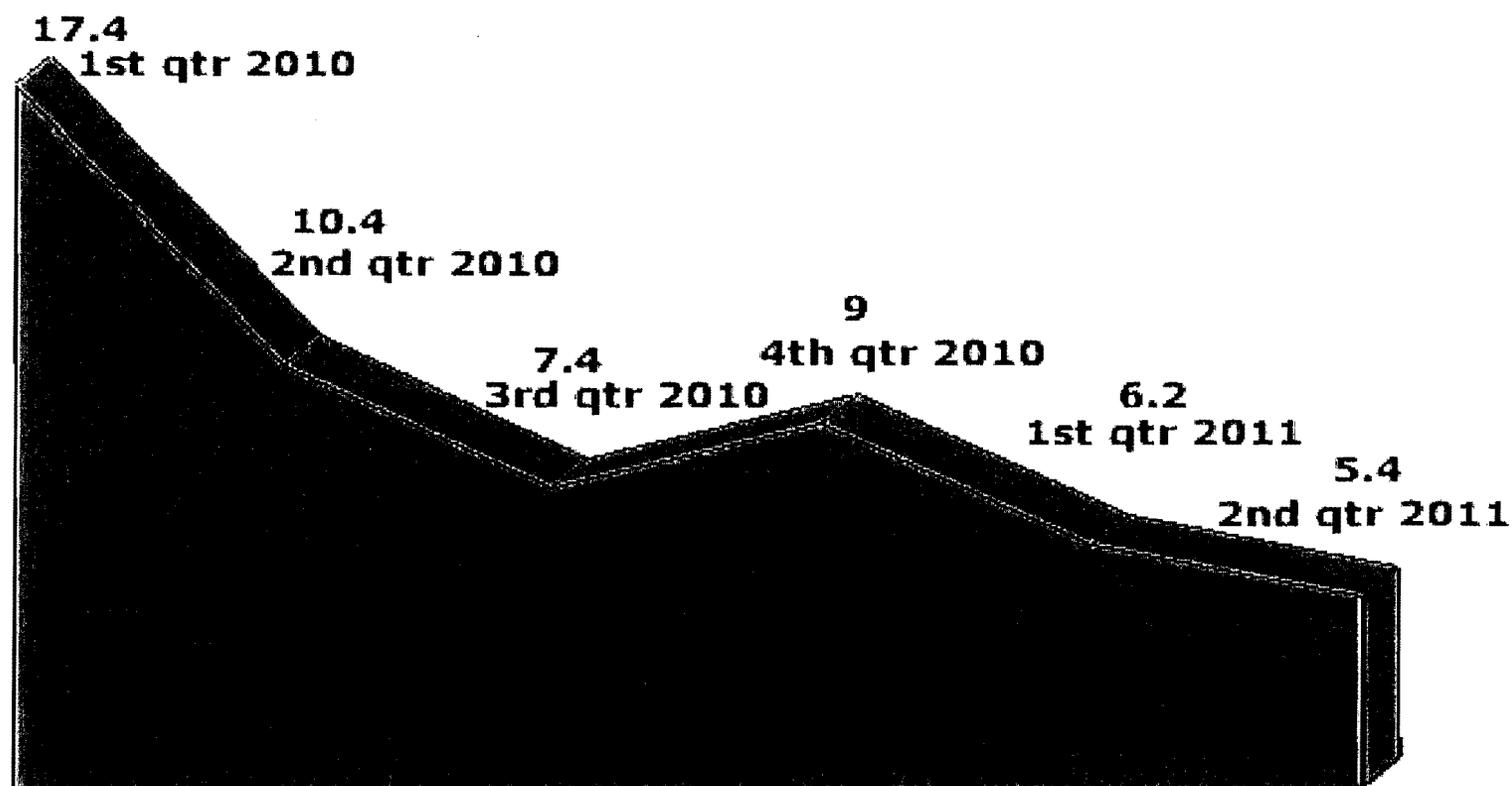
* After a consumer has been unable to resolve an issue directly with the cable operator, the Cable and Broadband Office will provide assistance. After the provider reports that the issue has been resolved, the Cable and Broadband Office will send a customer satisfaction survey. Customer satisfaction among consumers who have a complaint resolved directly by the cable operator without assistance by the Cable and Broadband Office is not included in this data set.

Last Updated: October 3, 2011

Days to Resolve Consumer Complaint After Filed With Cable and Broadband Office

[Download Complaint Resolution Report](#)

Over the past 18 months, the average number of days it takes for the cable providers to resolve complaints filed with the Cable and Broadband Office has dropped dramatically. We are pleased with the providers, improved performance in resolving complaints referred by the Cable and Broadband Office but continued emphasis needs to be placed on more timely resolution of complaints without, or prior to, having to be referred to our office.



Montgomery County Maryland
2011 Cable & Broadband Complaint Resolution Report

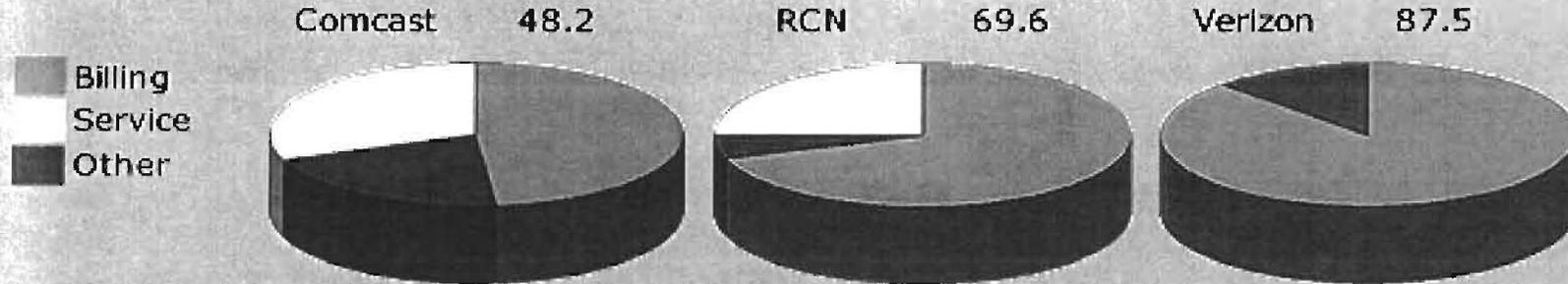
	1st Qtr-11	2nd Qtr-11	3rd Qtr-11	4th Qtr-11
Comcast % Resolved	86.4%	93.0%		
Received	110	114		
Resolved	95	106		
# of days to Resolve	5.6	4.9		
RCN % Resolved	100.0%	62.5%		
Received	10	8		
Resolved	10	5		
# of days to Resolve	2.7	4.8		
Verizon % Resolved	100.0%	83.9%		
Received	84	56		
Resolved	84	47		
# of days to Resolve	10.2	6.4		
Total % Resolved	92.6%	88.8%		
Received	204	178		
Resolved	189	158		
# of days to Resolve	6.2	5.4		

Last updated: October 3, 2011

Data Shows That Billing Is Main Concern

Download Complaint Description Breakdown

Billing issues comprise over 50% of the overall complaints that the Cable and Broadband Office receives as the pie charts indicate. The Cable and Broadband Office staff will be meeting with the cable providers over the next several weeks to address the need for improvement with billing errors on customer accounts. The need for better customer billing disclosures has been raised with the FCC Consumer Advisory Committee. (see below)



Montgomery County Maryland 2011 Cable and Broadband Complaints by Type

Complaint Description Breakdown Timeframe: 2011 2nd QTR

<i>Comcast Complaints</i>	<i>Billing</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>VoIP Service</i>	<i>Internet Service</i>	<i>Telephone Answ Time</i>	<i>Reception</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Marketing</i>	<i>Install</i>	<i>Service- ability</i>	<i>Cable Line Related</i>	<i>Other</i>	
114	55	24	7	18	1	19	5	4	4	3	11	3	
<i>Complaint Percentage</i>	48.2%	21.1%	6.1%	15.8%	0.8%	16.7%	4.4%	3.5%	3.5%	2.6%	9.6%	2.6%	
<i>Total Issue Percentage</i>	35.7%	15.6%	4.5%	11.7%	0.8%	12.3%	3.2%	2.8%	2.6%	1.9%	7.1%	1.0%	
<i>Total Issues Generated</i>							154	<i>Total Issues per Complaint</i>					1.4

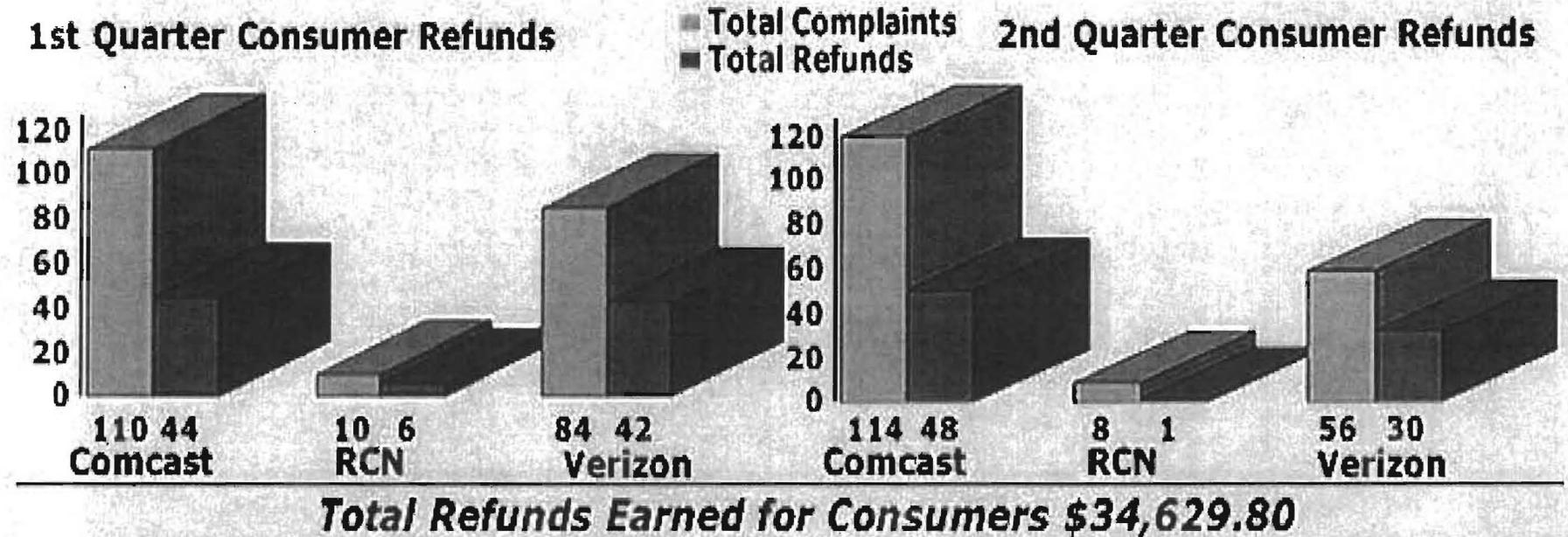
<i>RCN Complaints</i>	<i>Billing</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Telephone Service</i>	<i>Internet Service</i>	<i>Telephone Answ Time</i>	<i>Reception</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Marketing</i>	<i>Install</i>	<i>Service- ability</i>	<i>Cable Line Related</i>	<i>Other</i>	
8	7	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	
<i>Complaint Percentage</i>	87.5%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
<i>Issue Percentage</i>	63.6%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
<i>Total Issues Generated</i>							11	<i>Total Issues per Complaint</i>					1.4

<i>Verizon Complaints</i>	<i>Billing</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Internet Service</i>	<i>Telephone Answ Time</i>	<i>Reception</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Marketing</i>	<i>Install</i>	<i>Service- ability</i>	<i>Cable Line Related</i>	<i>Other</i>		
56	39	3	4	2	3	7	12	1	0	2	2		
<i>Complaint Percentage</i>	69.8%	5.4%	7.1%	3.6%	5.4%	12.5%	21.4%	1.6%	0.0%	3.6%	3.6%		
<i>Issue Percentage</i>	52.0%	4.0%	5.3%	2.7%	4.0%	9.3%	16.0%	1.3%	0.0%	2.7%	2.7%		
<i>Total Issues Generated</i>							75	<i>Total Issues per Complaint</i>					1.3



The Cable Office Reports Over \$34,000 in Refunds Year to Date

[Download Consumer Refund Report](#)



Montgomery County Maryland
2011 Cable & Broadband Refund Report

<i>Consumer Credits Obtained by the Cable & Broadband Office</i>						
	1st Qtr 2011			2nd Qtr 2011		
	Comcast	RCN	Verizon	Comcast	RCN	Verizon
Total Filed Complaints	110	10	84	114	8	56
Total Complaints Receiving Credits	44	6	42	48	1	30
Percentage of Complaints Receiving Credits	40.0%	60.0%	50.0%	42.1%	12.5%	53.6%
Total Amount Credited	\$8,348.35	\$1,204.44	\$8,393.82	\$11,439.88	\$108.56	\$5,134.75
Average Amount Credited per Complaint	\$189.74	\$200.74	\$199.85	\$238.33	\$108.56	\$171.16
Grand Total of Credits Obtained on Behalf of Subscribers	\$17,946.61			\$16,683.19		

Last Updated: October 4, 2011

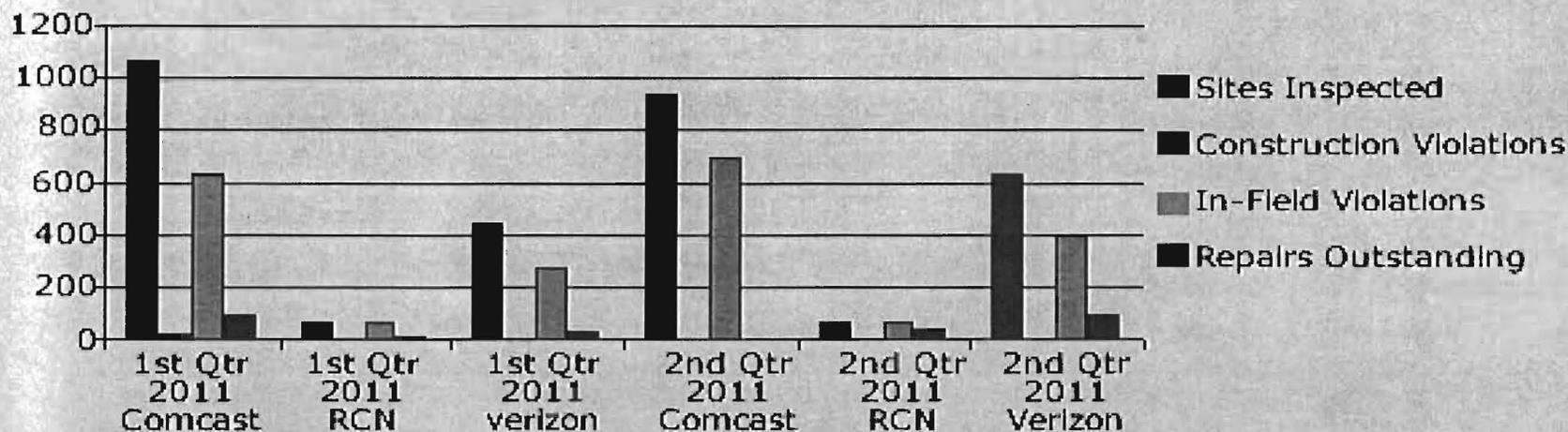
Inspections and Violations

[Download Inspection Report](#)

The revised cable inspection program continues to demonstrate value. New construction and installation work performed by Comcast is 97% code compliant and 100% of work performed by RCN and Verizon is code compliant. An area of concern is the number of in-field violations continues to be high and the percentage not yet repaired or not being repaired within the 30-day timeframe required by the franchise agreements was significantly higher in the 2nd quarter than in the 1st quarter.

The Office of Cable and Broadband Services is currently working with the providers to identify the violations that are older than 30 days and create a timeline to get those violations addressed. If the violations are not addressed the cable provider could be assessed liquidated damages.

Updated: Since August 2011 the Office of Cable and Broadband Services met with all three providers to improve the repair rate. As a result Comcast has corrected 85 percent of its Repairs Outstanding, reducing the Repairs Outstanding from 571 to 86.



COMCAST INSPECTIONS AND VIOLATIONS										
	1st Qtr-11		2nd Qtr-11		3rd Qtr-11		4th Qtr-11		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sites Inspected	1087	NA	1012						2,079	NA
Construction Violations	14	3%	6	1%					20	2%
In-field Violations	629	98%	508	99%					1,135	98%
Total Violations	643		512						1,155	
Total Repaired	557	87%	512	100%					1,069	93%
Repairs Outstanding	88	13%	0	0%					88	7%
Re-Inspections	48	9%	151	29%					199	18%
% Found Corrected	48	98%	82	41%					81	95%

RCN INSPECTIONS AND VIOLATIONS										
	1st Qtr-11		2nd Qtr-11		3rd Qtr-11		4th Qtr-11		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sites Inspected	80	NA	0						80	NA
Construction Violations	0	0%	0						0	0%
In-field Violations	80	100%	81	100%					121	100%
Total Violations	80		81						121	
Total Repaired	54	90%	27	44%					81	87%
Repairs Outstanding	6	10%	34	56%					40	33%
Re-Inspections	4	7%	14	52%					18	15%
% Found Corrected	4	100%	13	93%					81	95%

VERIZON INSPECTIONS AND VIOLATIONS										
	1st Qtr-11		2nd Qtr-11		3rd Qtr-11		4th Qtr-11		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sites Inspected	438	NA	1,312						1,751	NA
Construction Violations	0	0%	1	0%					1	0%
In-field Violations	289	100%	399	100%					688	100%
Total Violations	289		400						689	
Total Repaired	245	91%	328	82%					571	85%
Repairs Outstanding	24	9%	74	18%					98	15%
Re-Inspections	9	4%	70	21%					79	12%
% Found Corrected	8	88.9%	39	55.7%					81	95%

Montgomery County's Cable and Broadband Administrator Appointed to FCC Consumer Advisory Committee



Montgomery County's Cable and Broadband Administrator, Mitsuko R. Herrera, has been appointed to the Federal Communications Commission's Consumer Advisory Committee. The Committee, established in 2000, makes recommendations regarding consumer issues and works to facilitate the participation of consumers, including those with disabilities and underserved populations, in proceedings before the Commission.

The three major projects that the committee will be working on are:

- 1) Promoting Broadband Adoption
- 2) Consumer Protection-Billing Issues
- 3) Accessibility of Telecommunication Equipment for the Disabled.

For more information about the Consumer Advisory Committee you can visit their website at: www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/consumer-advisory-committee.

Comcast Essentials Helps to Bridge the Technology Gap



As part of the conditions of the Comcast-NBC Universal merger, Comcast has announced that it will launch a program that will help low income families obtain broadband Internet access starting in the 2011 "back to school season". The "*Internet Essentials*" program is designed to help bridge the digital divide. The program provides affordable Internet access, the opportunity to purchase a computer, and broadband training to low-income families.

The *Internet Essentials* program offers:

- Comcast residential Economy Internet service for \$9.95 per month plus applicable taxes and fees, with no activation fees, no additional equipment rental charges, no credit checks, no price increases and no long-term contracts.
- The option to purchase a pre-configured computer for \$149.99 (plus applicable taxes); and
- Access to online, in print and classroom based digital literacy training.

An entire low-income household will be able to participate in the program if the household:

- (1) is located where Comcast offers internet service
- (2) has at least one child receiving free meals through the National School Lunch program
- (3) has not subscribed to Comcast Internet service within the last 90 days
- (4) does not have an overdue Comcast bill or unreturned equipment.

Participating families may be able to benefit from *Internet Essentials* for the entire life of their child's K-12 education, as long as they remain eligible. For more information visit <http://www.internetessentials.com>.

Approximately 30,000 children in Montgomery County Public Schools are eligible for free meals. The Cable and Broadband Office is working with Comcast and MCPS to monitor program eligibility and the effectiveness of the program outreach, promotion and broadband training.

Topic	Verify Topic	Public Answer
Cable company construction/excavation complaints; crew digging in yard/neighborhood Cable office hours	Is there or was there a construction crew working in your yard/neighborhood?	Cable providers are permitted to work within the right-of-way (ROW) and the Public Utility Easement (PUE). The Cable Office has field Inspectors and works closely with Inspectors who are with the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services. Field Inspectors may be dispatched to visit the construction site to assure proper construction practices. Additionally, the cable operator/construction crew is accountable for proper restoration. To file a Cable complaint, please see topic "CABLE COMPLAINTS" or click on URL 2 below to file a complaint online. Weekdays 7:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.
Cable programming regulation	Is this an issue regarding the regulation of cable television programming?	The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) handles all issues concerning explicit content, inappropriate language. Please direct your concerns to the FCC by clicking on URL 2 below, or call 1-888-225-5322.
Call from Media about any topic or issue Public Information Office (PIO)	Confirm that the caller represents a news organization and ask them what news organization they represent.	If you represent a news organization as a reporter, editor producer assignment editor, photographer or videographer and have a question about a County program or service, the Executive's policies or position on any topic, a news/press release or article, a County Executive statement, County publication, or any other issue related to Montgomery County government, call 240-777-6507 or email publicinformation@montgomerycountymd.gov. To view recent information released click on first URL address. For information on PIO or to send a question or request for information by email click on the second URL.
Comcast contact information		COMCAST office for consumers telephone number is 301.424.4400 and the address is 20 West Gude Drive, Rockville, MD 20850.
Complaint for persistent problem not corrected/fixed by cable operator/provider	When did you file your complaint with the Cable office? If fewer than thirty days, advise caller that 30 days must have elapsed after filing complaint before case can be escalated to the Cable Compliance Commission. If more than 30 days has elapsed, forward to Cable Office.	The complainant may request a hearing before the Cable Compliance Commission (CCC). The CCC was established as another step to help with unresolved cable issues. After the Office of Cable and Communication Services has filed an issue with the cable operator, and the complaint has remained unresolved for 30 days, the complainant may request a hearing before the Cable Compliance Commission. When filed with the CCC, it is reviewed by the Commission to ensure jurisdiction. Once that is established, a hearing is set and both parties are notified. Many issues that are filed with the CCC result from property damage, but subscribers have filed service related issues as well. The Commission has the authority to award damages up to \$1,000. In some instances, customers may be referred to the Maryland Small Claims Court website. If the customer has not yet filed a Cable complaint and would like to do so, please see topic "CABLE COMPLAINTS" or click on URL 2 below to file a complaint online.
County Cable Montgomery	Are you calling about County Cable Montgomery?	This channel covers County government news, public affairs programming, and live gavel-to-gavel Council sessions and press conferences of the County Executive. County Cable is on channel 6 for Comcast and RCN subscribers; channel 30 for Verizon FiOS customers. For a listing of where to find other Public, Education and Government (PEG) information offered by the three Cable providers, please click URL 2 below.

Topic	Verify Topic	Public Answer
Cable Complaints	Is this a call about a Cable complaint regarding billing, cable service, cable line, cable marketing, cable telephone service, cable Internet service, construction, excavation, cable connectivity, cable installation, cable reception or other cable related issue? For non-cable provided telephone service complaints, see topic "COMPLAINTS ABOUT UTILITIES."	The Montgomery County Department of Technology Services, Office of Cable and Communication Services, investigates Cable related complaints such as: billing, cable service, cable line, cable marketing, cable telephone service, construction, cable excavation, cable connectivity, cable installation, cable reception and other cable related issues. This office serves as an intermediary to resolve issues between the cable operator and subscribers. After a customer has contacted their cable provider regarding a cable related concern and have not received a satisfactory resolution, they may request assistance from the County's Cable Office. Complaints or questions about cable service should first be directed to the customer's cable operator. Comcast 301-424-4400 www.comcast.com RCN 1-800-746-4726 www.rcn.net Verizon 1-888-553-1555
Cable Office location		The Office of Cable and Communication Services, a Division of the Montgomery County Department of Technology Services is located at 100 Maryland Avenue, Suite 250 Rockville, MD 20850. 240-773-8111
Cable company advance billing	Are you calling about advance billing by the Cable Company?	Cable operators are permitted to establish their own terms and conditions regarding payment procedures. By subscribing to cable service, the user agrees to the payment procedures set forth by the provider. The FCC Cable Act permits advance billing. This was an incentive to the cable operator to provide cash flow during construction of the cable plant. To file a Cable complaint, please see topic "CABLE COMPLAINTS" or click on URL 2 below to file a complaint online.

Topic	Verify Topic	Public Answer
County cable providers	Name, address and phone number for each of the three Cable providers in Montgomery County	Comcast: 301-424-4400; 20 West Gude Drive, Rockville, MD 20850; Verizon: 1-888-553-1555; 11006 Veirs Mill Road Wheaton, MD 20902 (Behind Wheaton Plaza); RCN: 1-800-746-4726; 10000 Derekwood Lane Lanham, MD 20706
Definition of S.E.C.		S.E.C. is the abbreviation for a Service Entrance Cable. This cable runs from the meter into the service panel.
Franchise fees		Cable providers are required to pay a 5% franchise fee to the County based on the provider's gross revenue for the franchise area. The 5% franchise fee represents a rental fee for the provider's infrastructure that occupies the right-of-ways throughout the County. The 5% franchise fee listed on their monthly bill is slightly higher than 5% because of the way the cable operator opts to list line items on their bill. The monthly subscription fees are not the only revenue included in the calculation the franchise fee. To file a Cable complaint, please see topic "CABLE COMPLAINTS" or click on URL 2 below to file a complaint online.
Miss Utility		Please contact Miss Utility to mark property prior to digging at 1-800-257-7777
Questions about the Comcast product name change to "XFINITY"	Are you calling about the Comcast service product name change to XFINITY?	Beginning February 12, 2010, Comcast changed the names of their Video (TV), Internet, and Telephone services in Montgomery County to XFINITY TV, XFINITY Internet, and XFINITY Voice, respectively. The Comcast corporate name will not change, only the name of their service products.
Regulation of cable rates	Has there been an increase in your monthly cable rate?	Comcast filed with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for effective competition based on cable alternatives available in Montgomery County. On October 6, 2009, the FCC ordered the revocation of the County's rate regulatory oversight. Due to his action, the County no longer has any regulatory authority over any rates charged by Comcast.
Responsibility for cable company's equipment	Do you want to know who is responsible for the cable operator's equipment?	Cable modems, routers, converter boxes, remotes and power cords are the property of the cable provider. The subscriber pays a monthly rental fee for use of this equipment and is responsible for their safe return if service is ever discontinued. Please obtain a receipt when any equipment is returned. The cable company's receipt is the only proof of returned equipment. To file a Cable complaint, please see topic "CABLE COMPLAINTS" or click on URL 2 below to file a complaint online.
Serviceability complaints: newly built house not in cable provider's system/ too far.	Are you interested in the installation of cable and cable related services but your address is not listed in the cable operator's system?	There are several factors that determine the availability of cable service. The house must be within 175 ft. from the street right-of-way, and the termination of the cable plant must be within 400 ft. Any greater distance would require a cable plant extension. Comcast is permitted to charge for the construction cost of a plant extension. To file a Cable complaint, please see topic "CABLE COMPLAINTS" or click on URL 2 below to file a complaint online.
State taxes on cable bill	Why are there State taxes added to my Cable Bill?	State taxes are added to all equipment and Pay Per View (PPV) movies ordered. Additionally, special taxes and fees are added to any PPV sporting events.

Topic	Verify Topic	Public Answer
Stop billing for disconnected cable service	Are you still being billed for disconnected cable services?	When a subscriber contacts the cable company to disconnect service, the billing should stop the following day. To file a Cable complaint, please see topic "CABLE COMPLAINTS" or click on URL 2 below to file a complaint online.
Web address for the Cable Office		Further information is available on the DTS website utilizing the provided link.

☐ **Sec. 8A-30. Cable and Communications Advisory Committee.**

(a) *Established.* The Cable and Communications Advisory Committee may provide advice and recommendations to the County Executive, County Council, and the Department of Technology Services on all telecommunications issues, including the administration of this Chapter and any franchise agreement or application.

(b) The Advisory Committee should meet quarterly or more frequently if requested by the County Executive or County Council or if the Chair or Committee finds it necessary.

(c) The Advisory Committee must have 15 voting members appointed by the Executive and confirmed by the Council for 3-year terms. The members should broadly represent technology areas.

(d) The membership must include one representative selected by the Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League; one representative selected by the City of Rockville; and one representative selected by the City of Takoma Park. The members annually must elect the chairperson and vice chairperson of the Committee. A person must not serve more than 2 consecutive terms as chairperson.

(e) Members are subject to Chapter 19A, except that financial disclosure statements are confidential and limited to communications-related activities and interests.

(FY 1991 L.M.C., ch. 3, § 1; 1998 L.M.C., ch. 18, § 2; 2002 L.M.C., ch. 31, § 1; 2005 L.M.C., ch. 14, § 2; 2005 L.M.C., ch. 24, § 1; 2006 L.M.C., ch. 34, § 1; 2006 L.M.C., ch. 33, § 1.)

Editor's note—Section 8A-30, formerly 8A-31, was renumbered pursuant to 2006 L.M.C., ch. 34, § 1.

2006 L.M.C., ch. 34, § 3, repeals 2002 L.M.C., ch. 31, § 4, as amended by 2005 L.M.C., ch. 14, § 2.

2005 L.M.C., ch. 14, § 2, amends 2002 L.M.C., ch. 31, § 4, as follows: Expiration date. This act expires on December 31, 2008.

2002 L.M.C., ch. 31, §§ 2, 3 and 4, state:

Sec. 2. Service-level requirements for cable modem service. The County Executive must issue regulations under method (2) establishing minimum cable modem service levels that a franchisee must provide. The regulations supersede any less-stringent requirements in a franchise or subscriber agreement.

Sec. 3. Transition.

(a) This Act applies to each current or future franchise, franchisee, subscriber, or other person subject to the requirements of the County Cable Communications Act, as amended by this and any future Act, and supersedes any contrary regulation, franchise, franchise agreement, subscriber agreement, or other agreement. The complaint adjudication provisions in Chapter 8A of the Code, as amended by this Act, apply to any complaint pending on, or filed on or after, the date this Act takes effect [March 6, 2003]. Section 8A-31A(i) applies to any subscriber agreement modified or entered into after this Act becomes law [December 5, 2002].

(b) The County Executive must designate the initial term of 2 members of the Cable Compliance Commission as 2 years. Any later term of these 2 members, and the terms of all other members, must be 3 years.

Sec. 4. Expiration date. This Act expires on December 31, 2005.

Sec. 8A-31. Cable Compliance Commission.

(a) *Established.* The Cable Compliance Commission is established to adjudicate subscriber complaints involving customer cable service and other consumer protection claims that arise under this Chapter, any regulation adopted or franchise agreement approved under this Chapter, or Section 11-4A.

(b) *Membership.* The Commission is comprised of 5 voting members appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. Each appointee must be appointed to a 3-year term. The Commission should include:

- (1) a cable television service subscriber;
- (2) a broadband Internet service subscriber;
- (3) an individual with general business experience; and
- (4) an individual with technical experience in communications.

(c) *Officers.* The Commissioners annually must elect a chair and vice chair of the Commission. An individual must not serve more than 2 consecutive terms as chair.

(d) *Reserved.*

(e) *Ethics.* Each member of the Commission is subject to Chapter 19A, except that the member must file a limited public financial disclosure statement regarding any communication-related activities and interests and a full confidential financial disclosure statement.

(f) *Authority.* The Commission may:



Office of Cable and Communication Services

Cable TV & Internet

CCM

PEG Network

Telecommunication Towers

Administration

Cable and Communications Advisory Committee(CCAC)

Created	Montgomery County Code Section 8A-31
Purpose	To provide advice and recommendations on the administration of this Chapter (Cable Communications) and any franchise agreement or application.
Membership	The CCAC is composed of 15 voting members appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.
Terms	Three year terms - no compensation.
Meetings	Generally the 4th Wednesday of each month, at 7:00 p.m., in room 225 of the Council Office Building (COB). Meetings may be rescheduled to accommodate holidays. Check link on the left to confirm meeting dates.
Staff	Keith Watkins (240)777-3793
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelly Cameron • Michael Gelman • Paul Goldberg • Mona Hall McKenzie • Jose Zegarra Holder, Vice Chair • Bing Kung • Treffaney R. Lowe • Michael Reiter • Noreene Wells (Takoma Park) • Richard Wells, Chair • Suzanne Weiss, Secretary • Ashley Simmons • Theola Poole (Rockville) • Cathy Drzyzgula (Maryland Municipal League) • Rob Andreoli

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